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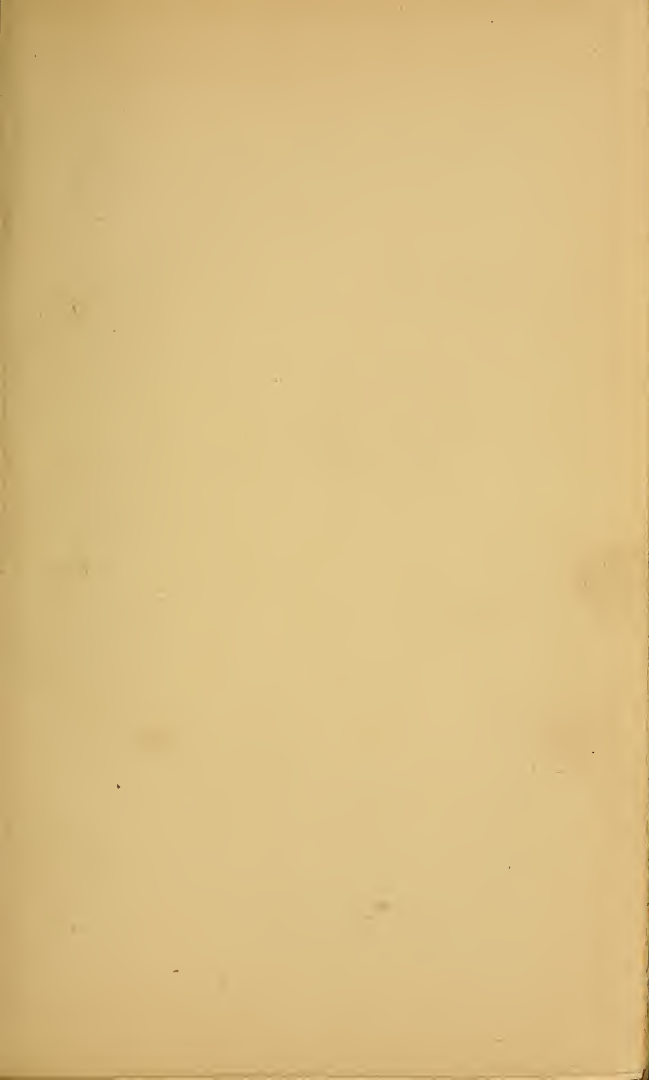
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**Papers and
Verses**

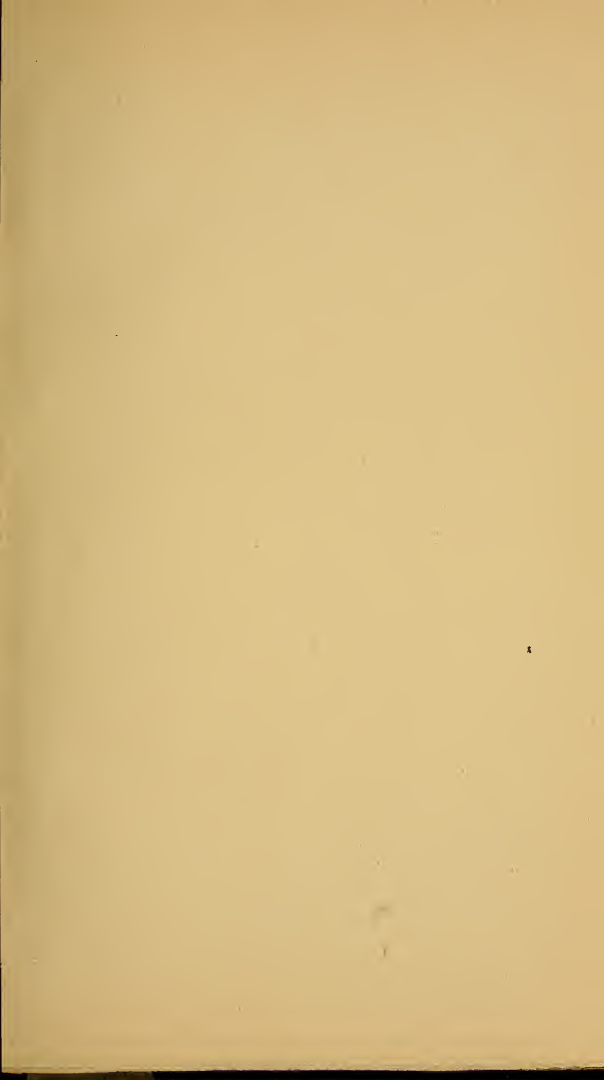
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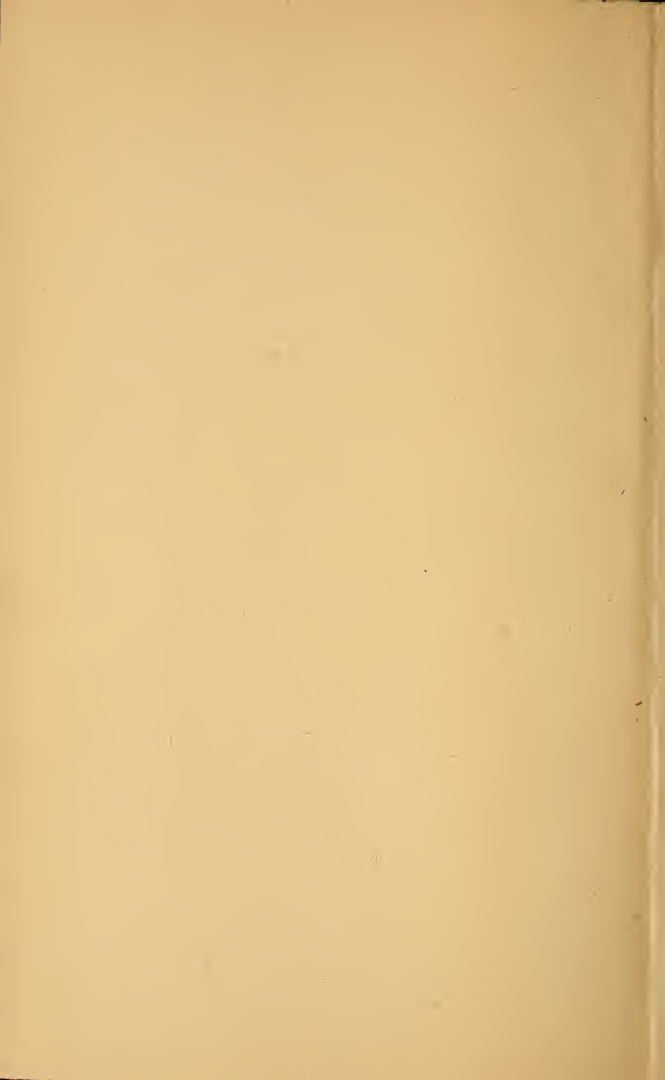
Harriet Gaylord Smith

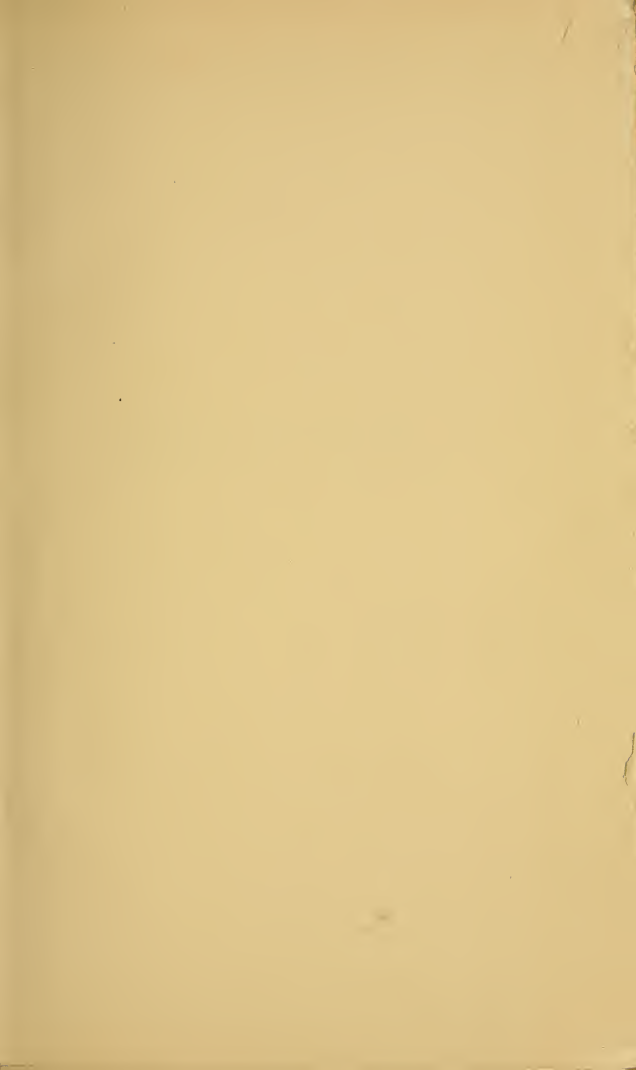












PAPERS AND VERSES







PAPERS AND VERSES

BY

HARRIET GAYLORD SMITH



CHICAGO, MDCCCC

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1900

GIFT

WINFRED OVERHOLSER

DEC. 13, 1951

KL 237 53

Few people pass out of this world more regretted, and leaving sweeter memories, than Harriet Gaylord Smith, who died April 8th, 1896.

Aside from the affection she held as a kind and noble woman, she was admired for her wit and intellectual ability, and not a few men and women of Chicago have remembrance of her witty sayings, and of her poems, stories and other papers read on various occasions.

Since her death many persons have expressed a wish that there was some collection of her writings, and especially that some of those appearing in this book might be preserved. In view of these suggestions, it has been thought proper to publish this small volume.

It is not expected that this publication will be a source of profit, but it seemed eminently fit, that it should be sold for the benefit of a charity whose welfare Mrs. Smith, during her life, held close at heart. With the thought that some good may thus come of it, the book is offered for sale to her friends and to the public.

Chicago, 1900.



TO
DEAR MRS. ROCKWELL
ON HER EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY,
APRIL 9TH, 1883

1st Timothy 5th, 9, 10

Here's health and long life to "The Bible-class Belle,"
The beautiful woman we all love so well,
In whose gracious presence this union is seen,
The wisdom of eighty, and wit of eighteen.

Hear Timothy tell what a widow should be,
And judge who could suit him more nearly than she;
She is over threescore, and her good works are
praised;

She has taken in strangers, three children she's raised.

She has washed the saints' socks, if she hasn't their
feet;

She has cheered the afflicted with sympathy sweet;
Good works she has followed with all of her might;
And e'en in the number of husbands she's right.

These eighty bright buds, with their floating perfume,
Which fills, like the odor of ointment, the room,
Of the sum of her years form an emblem most true,
With joy for their sunshine, and teardrops for dew.

All sunshine would wither, all shadow would blight,
But mingling them wisely, the Father of Light,
Through pleasure and sunshine, through sorrow and
showers,
Brings on to perfection our souls and his flowers.

And what though we wither and fade as a leaf,
And the time of our blooming, at longest, is brief?
Again in the springtime sweet roses shall bloom,
And beauty immortal shall rise from the tomb.

From her loving friend,

HARRIET GAYLORD SMITH

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MY LOST FRIEND

O CLOSEST friend, once ever at my side,

I miss thee more than words avail to tell!
To thee my dearest dreams I'd confide,
Sure thou would'st guard them secretly
and well.

Now when I stretch toward thee my seeking
hand,

I wildly clutch the unresponsive air;
Groping I feel for thee, and speechless stand,
Slowly discerning that thou art not there.

"All flesh is grass," the royal psalmist saith;
Thou art cut off, friend of my former days.

The fashion of this world, it perisheth,
And I am bewildered by new-fangled ways;
But still I am cherishing a faith sublime,

Unmoved by all that has conspired to
shock it;

Great changes bring the whirligig of time,
And those of fashion may return my pocket!

SOCIETY'S CRIME A THRENODY

IN the good old days when life was new,
And words were simpler, and hearts more true,
There lived an old lady of primitive ways
Whom rich and poor delighted to praise.
Dame Hospitality, this was her name,
And her door stood open to all who came;
For she counted it joy with each to share
Her pleasant home and her simple fare;
And the people gathered from far and from
near

For a smile of welcome, a word of cheer;
And, came they in coaches or rickety wagons,
They had comfort of apples and stayings of
flagons.

But years passed on, and there came to town
A frisky dame in a gorgeous gown;
And she found seven others as silly as she,
And they called each other Society.

SOCIETY'S CRIME A THRENODY

Their heads were empty, their heels were
light,

So they danced and capered from morning
till night;

And somewhere or other, on every day

They sat down to eat, and they rose up to
play.

They thought themselves happy, but now
and then *

They caught a word from the mouths of men,

A word of honest and hearty praise

Of the good old dame and her simple ways;

And it filled them full of as fierce a hate

As Haman felt for the Jew at the gate;

And each one lifted her jeweled hand

And swore she would banish her out of the
land.

So they sought next morning her open door,

And they flung her down on the polished
floor;

And with ribbons of yellow of pink and of
white,

They snared her and noosed her and pinioned
her tight.

SOCIETY'S CRIME A THRENODY

She did not strive and she did not cry,
But the pleading glance of her gentle eye
Was so full of reproach for their envious spite
That they hastened to bury it out of their
sight

With roses of every various hue—
Pink, crimson, and yellow, and possibly blue;
They stifled her first with their sweet-smell-
ing savors,

And stopped her last gasp with what they
called "favors."

So there she lay dead; but of all things
human

The cruelest thing is a heartless woman;
And to make her sad ending as sure as
could be,

They drowned her in gallons of "Afternoon
Tea."

They had had their way, and carried their
point,

And their times no longer were out of joint;
So each seized each by her murderous hand,
And they danced round the grave to a man-
dolin band.

SOCIETY'S CRIME A THRENODY

And this is the terrible way that it came
That the dear old lady is now but a name;
And we mourn the loss of her simple ways,
And sometimes sigh for the good old days.

THE NEW BONNET

A FOOLISH little maiden bought a foolish
little bonnet,
With a ribbon and a feather and a bit of lace
upon it;
And that the other maidens of the little town
might know it,
She thought she'd go to meeting the next
Sunday, just to show it.

But though the little bonnet was scarce
larger than a dime,
The getting of it settled proved to be a work
of time;
So when 'twas fairly tied, all the bells had
stopped their ringing,
And when she came to meeting, sure enough,
the folks were singing.

THE NEW BONNET

So this foolish little maiden stood and waited
at the door,
And she shook her ruffles out behind and
smoothed them down before ;
“Hallelujah! Hallelujah!” sang the choir
above her head,
“Hardly knew you! Hardly knew you!”
were the words she thought they said.

This made the little maiden feel so very,
very cross
That she gave her little mouth a twist, her
little head a toss;
For she thought the very hymn they sang
was all about her bonnet,
With the ribbon and the feather and the bit
of lace upon it.

And she would not wait to listen to the
sermon or the prayer,
But pattered down the silent street, and hur-
ried down the stair,

THE NEW BONNET

Till she reached her little bureau, and in
a bandbox on it
Had hidden safe from critic's eye her foolish
little bonnet.

Which proves, my little maidens, that each
of you will find
In every Sabbath service but an echo to your
mind;
And the silly little head that's filled with
silly little airs
Will never get a blessing from sermons or
from prayers.

THE MODERN PIED PIPER

I MAY be out of fashion, but it sometimes
seems to me
That the very best procession my longing
eyes could see
Would be headed by the piper of famous
Hamelin town,
Who through our city streets should go,
a-piping up and down,
Till he turned from out the multitude of
laughing girls and boys
All the silly little Greenaways and priggish
Fauntleroyes,
With bonnets all too big for them, and
trousers much too tight,
With sashes and with flowing curls—and led
them out of sight,
And left with us such sensible and sturdy
girls and boys
As lived before the Greenaways and priggish
Fauntleroyes.

IN HEAVEN
I HAVE HER STILL

OH, mothers! who to-night in quiet cham-
bers

Watch eyelids close and prattling tongues
grow still,

Then, bending fondly, cover sleeping infants,
Thank God you have those living children
still.

When last the spring came laughing o'er
the meadows,

Waking the flowers, making glad the rill,
I rocked my cradle in the twilight shadows,
And thanked my God I had my baby still.

Now when the twilight shadows dimly gather,
Vacant that cradle stands, its rocking still;
And I, beside it, pray my Heavenly Father
To give me strength to bear His holy will.

IN HEAVEN I HAVE HER STILL

Yet often 'mid those hours of bitter weeping,
 'Mid swelling bursts of anguish, loud and
 wild,
God pities me, and sends me tender comforts
 More tender than I ever gave my child.

And though I cannot wholly cease my
 weeping,
 Though mother-longings still my heart
 must fill,
I yield my baby to her angel's keeping,
 And thank my God in Heaven I have her
 still.

CLEVELAND, May 17th.

THE SHEPHERD

I WATCHED a shepherd following his sheep,
And saw him, through the shadeless summer day,
With rod and staff their wand'ring footsteps keep,
And guide them in the safe and pleasant way.

This through the day, but when the night
had come,
And evening dews upon the grass lay cold,
I saw them meekly follow, one by one,
To the warm shelter of the waiting fold.

All save one stubborn sheep, which still
would stray,
And heedless linger in the meadows cold,
Till by his rod the shepherd showed the way,
And with sharp smiting drove her to the fold.

THE SHEPHERD

And in that straying one myself I saw;
Saw how to gentleness I would not yield,
Till from Thy rod I learned to love Thy law,
And by Thy stripes my wanderings were
healed.

CHILDREN IN FICTION

Is it not true that we dwellers in cities have really a fuller enjoyment of flowers than the country folk?

We need not, like them, wait longingly for the set time of their natural blooming, but can at any moment, by the touch of a bell and a word in a cylinder, summon the roses of summer to bloom even by our winter fires.

But one rural pleasure is in a great measure denied to us, the picking of our own flowers, the choosing of each blossom which goes to the making of every nosegay.

Separated by years of time, with hundreds of conventional bouquets, on whose beauty rested the shadow of the florist's bill, there rise before me two visions of flower-gathering, one a memory from my childhood, and the other a rare joy of my later years.

CHILDREN IN FICTION

On the first my treasure trove was a tiny bunch of short-stemmed, faint-scented wild flowers, and on the other I grasped a bouquet of such size that for the first time in my life my hand seemed too small.

Never shall I forget those roses of Santa Barbara, those fuchsias, jasmines, and passion-flowers, those snowy daisies, and, strange in their novelty, and beautiful by their contrast, others of a brilliant Sevres blue.

Do you wonder by what subtle spell of association the thought of "children in fiction" has brought these dim visions before me?

Simply this, that in my search for them through the early ages of literature, I find their faces peeping as shyly from the background of their elders as did the wild flowers of my childhood from spreading leaves and mossy tree-trunks, while only the varied color and abundant bloom of that later bouquet can adequately represent the group of children which crowd the field of modern fiction.

CHILDREN IN FICTION

A friend who knows my fondness for beginning at the very beginning of things said to me, apropos of my subject, "By the way, who is the first child mentioned in fiction?" It sounded like a conundrum, but as I knew it was not meant for one, I thought for a moment, and then named that lonely child whom Hector called Scamandrus, but all else Astyanax.

His tender beauty clings like a bright wall-flower to those Trojan battlements, and though "a babe too young to speak," he seems worthy to head the procession of children which through ages the wand of genius has summoned into life.

In the far past all our glimpses of these children show them in attitudes of dependence and subordination, and all precepts addressed to them inculcate only the duties of reverence and submission.

A seal seems to have been set on their lips, so silently do they move about among their elders, and even the blessing of our Lord was long in bringing them into the

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wide plane which His love would claim for them.

All through the days of medieval Christianity they were evidently regarded as objects of pity, and seldom appear in any other relation to their elders than as the victims of their cruelty.

Harrowing details of the offending of the little ones form the staple of these chronicles, and the vengeance which pursues the evil men by whom these offenses come points the moral of the dismal tales.

The story of Hug of Lincoln as related by the Prioress of the Canterbury pilgrimage gives a striking instance of this sort.

The piety of the little Jewish boy who, as he came to and fro, full merrily would sing and chant "*Alma Redemptoris*" so infuriated his kinsmen that they cut his throat and cast him into a pit. Even there he sat upright, and "*Alma Redemptoris* gan to synge so lowde that all the place bigan to rynge."

Revealed by this miracle, his body was taken up, and carried with a great procession

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to the next Abbaye, while his mother swooning by the bier lay.

In two other of Chaucer's stories, those of "Constance" and "Patient Griselda," the sharing of the sorrow of the mother by the child adds sharpness to the sword which pierces her own soul. A recent writer sees in this close union of mother and child in suffering a transfer of the Madonna into English literature, but is it not rather only another presentation of the eternal motherly as shown in the story of Ceres and Proserpine and many other classic myths?

The rare mention of children in Shakespeare is attributed by Rosetti to the circumstances of his life. He says: "His marriage as a mere lad, and a certain unnatural maturity, must have early separated him from companionship with children. His son died young, and his busy life in London must have prevented his knowledge of domestic interiors.

But if personal intercourse was necessary to his conception of his characters, from

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what world does he draw his pictures of kings and queens, of witches and fairies?

Is not the lack of children in his plays due rather to the limitation of stage representation in those happy days before the introduction of what has been irreverently called "The Kid Drama"?

The most striking picture of boyhood presented by him, that of Arthur in "King John," is too familiar for quotation, but that of Marcius in "Coriolanus" is perhaps less remembered.

Valeria says of him: "On my word, the father's son; I'll swear 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; caught it again: or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammocked it!"

Are not these indeed winged words, so highly do they express the quick darts of the insect and the eager pursuit of the boy?

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John Bunyan, though the prince of dreamers, writes himself down as a family man in his realistic description of the illness of Matthew in the second part of his "Pilgrim's Progress":

"Now Matthew, the eldest son of Christiana, fell sick, and his sickness was sore upon him, for he was much pained in his bowels, so that he was pulled as it were both ends together."

Christiana speedily summoned an ancient and well-approved physician, one Mr. Skill, who concluded that he was sick of the gripes, and said, "This boy has been tampering with something that lies in his maw undigested." (A little peach of emerald hue, perhaps.) So he made him a purge of the blood of a goat and the ashes of a heifer, but it was too weak.

So he made one to the purpose of the blood of Christ, with a promise or two, which he was to take fasting "in a half a quarter of a pint of the tears of repentance." So, after a short prayer for the blessing of God

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upon it, he took it, and "it put him into a fine heat, and a healthy sweat, and it quite rid him of his gripes."

It is noticeable that in England, a country where family life has apparently reached its highest development, and the literature of which abounds in the domestic novel, children are but tardily brought to the front.

Perhaps this may be accounted for by the fact that the interest of these English stories was for a long time so largely pre-nuptial.

Little brothers or sisters seldom help or hinder the progress of their elders toward matrimony, and it is only in the modern analytical novel that the deeper experiences which follow marriage are largely dealt with.

Even in such a typical domestic novel as "The Vicar of Wakefield" the children seldom have a speaking part, and are rather treated objectively as arousing the pride and affection of the parents.

If the creation of "Goody Two Shoes" be rightly attributed to Goldsmith, however,

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he has furnished us with one study of childhood which bids fair to be immortal.

The early novelists, Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson, make slight and almost slighting mention of children, and it is only as the child is father of the man that he seems to be held worthy of their consideration.

It is strange that Sir Walter Scott's love for his "Pet Marjorie" did not inspire him to reproduce her quaint personality in some of his novels, but he finds as little room for childish figures as any of his predecessors. A search for them in his long gallery of portraits shows us only the weird face of Mary Averul and the impish form of Flibbertigibbet, both too uncanny to seem like pictures of flesh-and-blood children.

But the thoughts of men are widened by the process of the suns, and there comes an epoch in every literature in which what has long been unobserved in society is suddenly brought to light.

Among the grown-ups of Miss Austen

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scarcely a child shows its face, and it is with surprise that we come upon the little Gardeners (left like bundles "to be called for") on the return of their parents from the convoy of Emma on her eventful visit to Bath.

The element of poverty and helplessness was at last recognized as something to be noted and reckoned with, and with this new conception of the claims of those unable to plead for themselves came in a recognition of the rights of children.

The child, so long ignored, is at last brought forward as a distinct element in literature, and England takes an early part in its introduction.

Wordsworth in his "Lyrical Ballads" and Mrs. Browning in her "Cry of the Children" raise the first notes of an appeal for the recognition of their rights, which was soon taken up by the warm heart and clear voice of Charles Dickens.

The wail which Mrs. Browning sends forth as voices rising from the depths of mines and the din of factories, he carries on till

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we hear it sounding from the school, the workhouse, the thieves' den, and, more sorrowfully still, from the dreary home where a stern father lets his little child go so pitilessly and so pitifully down to his death.

The impression produced by these portrayals of the woes of childhood can scarcely be realized by those who live in these happier days, when so many of the currents of benevolence are set in the direction of their relief.

Its results were immediate and marked, and in view of them we can forgive much that seems exaggerated and bizarre in the portraits of children presented by Dickens.

Those of them who play comic rôles seem to smirk and grimace, and those who suffer do it in a somewhat melodramatic fashion; but in spite of this air of self-consciousness, they are all types, and easily recognizable types, of certain classes of children.

Little Nell has her counterpart in the devoted daughter of many a humble household, and the abounding philanthropies of this age

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give many public-spirited mothers a pretext for shifting their domestic burdens onto the shoulders of daughters of Caddy Jellaby's self-sacrificing type.

We come upon the morbid and hydrocephalous Paul Dombey in the children's ward of our hospitals, and even the Kenwigs, with their pig-tails and pantalettes, their music-masters and their dancing lessons, may serve as melancholy examples of the passion for fancy and showy accomplishments which pervades all classes of our modern society.

The few children which appear in the novels of Bulwer and Thackeray are much less impressive than those of Dickens.

Little Sophie, the child who figures in "What Will He Do with It?" is but Little Nell fantastically bedecked with stage properties.

The interest which is felt in the early years of Henry Esmond's life soon fades before the stirring experiences which follow, and the childhood of Denis Duval, the story

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of whose life was interrupted by the death of its chronicler, Thackeray, displays no marked peculiarities.

Do you see that I have led you steadily on from among the shy and scanty flowers of those woodland depths till we stand at last, as I did, in that garden of California, bewildered by the wealth of bloom which awaits our choice?

And while that warning clock reminds me of the little while in which I can gather a few of them for you, how can I choose among so many?

Perhaps my best guide in this selection will be an attempt to indicate some of the various ways in which children find their place in books intended for older readers.

One of the most frequent and natural of these is the attempt to show the gradual development of their childish natures by education and circumstance into characters which influence their ultimate destiny.

Within the scope of such a book we see enacted the miracle of the Indian juggler,

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who shows in rapid succession the unfolding of a plant from its seed, through its bud and bloom, to fruitage.

Two striking instances of this class of book are George Eliot's "Mill on the Floss," and George Meredith's "Ordeal of Richard Feverel."

In the first of these we come early on this characterization of the personnel of the two children Tom and Maggie Tulliver.

He was one of those lads that grow everywhere in England, and at twelve or thirteen years look as much alike as goslings, as different as possible from Maggie, with her skin like a mulatto, her dark, heavy hair, and the incessant tossing of her head to keep it out of her gleaming eyes, giving her much the air of a Shetland pony.

In these children we have a striking instance of the two forms of heredity possible to fictitious characters, for as markedly as Tom is the child of the Tullivers, is his sister the reproduction of the nature and habits of the youthful Marion Evans.

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The same questioning of the problems of life, the same defiance of restraints and conventionalities, the same devotion to duty characterize both; and was not the outcome of their lives more nearly similar than would at first appear?

Who can doubt that to one of George Eliot's nature the wave of social ostracism with which she buffeted for so long was harder to bear than poor Maggie's short and sharp conflict with surging Floss?

In the "Ordeal of Richard Feverel" we have the story of the boy starved on a diet of maxims, and cramped by the theories of a pedantic and tyrannical father, who essays to play the part of Providence in the control of the life of his only son.

The boy is so manly and so generous, so brave in his avowal of his share in the crime of arson for which a humble companion is in danger of transportation, that it is hard to follow him to the bitter end which his father so cruelly makes inevitable.

By the way, have not the reputations of

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the old men of England been made to suffer unduly at the hands of recent writers, who have painted their general unpleasantness as a background which should bring into relief the shining virtues of their sons and grandsons?

Will not some one give us a story in which the oppression of a vicious and tyrannical grandchild is endured with such patience by a heavenly minded grandfather that the young imp at last repents and "hatches itself a cherubim"?

Again, we find children in a secondary position, but materially influencing the destinies of those with whom they are connected by relationship or affection.

In Mrs. Gaskell's "Ruth" and Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" we have support for my own theory that no love has such compelling force as that of a mother for her child, working as it does in one case, the making, and in the other the making permanent the bonds of a less holy passion.

A child's bitterest foes are so often those

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of his own household, that the enlightenment of parents is a frequent object for the introduction of children into books intended for adult readers.

Onto how many childish shoulders has been bound the burden of a false estimate of God which has kept their faces bowed to the earth and their young eyes from being lifted to the loving countenance of their Father in Heaven!

Is it strange that tortured by such a belief the boy Waldo, on that sun-parched African farm, should cry out in despairing defiance: "I hate God! I love Jesus Christ, but I hate God!"

But later on, like the shadow of a great rock to screen the tortured boy from the flashing of a justice as pitiless as that blinding African sun, appears a blessed vision of a figure coming over the dark green grass. "And it came closer and closer to him, and then the voice said, 'Come!' and he knew surely who it was. He ran to the dear feet and touched them with his hands—yes,

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he held them fast! When he looked up, the face was over him, the glorious eyes were loving him, and they two were close together."

On Castle Blair and its happy, breezy group of children this later formed sunshine always beams.

Hear Nessa's confession of faith—"Yes," said she, softly, "if God were to hate us, even when we are wicked, what should we do?"

"It often comes over me with a sort of rush of gladness how that when we make mistakes, and get tired, and go wrong, He is still there, watching over us and loving us all the time, never getting impatient.

"And you know," she added, a little shyly, "we are told to be as like God as we can."

What wonder that Ruskin set the seal of his cautious appreciation on this book in these words: "The book is good and lovely and true, having the best description of a noble child in it (Winnie) that I ever read;

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and nearly the best description of the next best thing—a noble dog.”

A frequent form of cruelty to children is the ruthless destruction of their illusions. Of this Hawthorne draws a striking picture in his “Snow Image.”

The girlish form modeled from snow by his children and endowed with life by their fancy is brought by a well-meaning but prosaic father to the glow of the fire, which melts it into nothingness.

Is there not here a lesson for those who steal too soon from their children their happy faith in Santa Claus, their own proper saint, the jingling of whose bells is sweeter to them than the chimes of any cathedral?

The one utterly unendurable sorrow has always seemed to me to be that of a mother who sees her child go down to death for lack of the arresting influence of nourishment, medicine, and favoring climate.

No picture of these hard conditions as imposed by pioneer life has ever moved me

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as does this one from "Zury," that fanciful story of Western emigration.

It was this way: "The little girl, who might have lived in a warm, rich, and comfortable home, could not bear the cruelty of her environment, and died after long and quiet suffering.

"How slow Death was in finishing his work that night! Long after the beloved eyes had turned up out of sight, the poor little chest kept on heaving, gasp succeeding gasp, the heart-broken mother praying that each might be the last.

"At last the end came, and Selina straightened the wasted limbs, put on the poor girl's best clothing, tied up the sharp chin, and closed the eyes with something—they had no coins to lay on the lids.

"They had no funeral; there was not even a burial till spring had thawed the ground so that a grave could be dug. They fixed two crotched sticks against the side of the house, and rested the little coffin on them.

"Through the winter following Selina

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could not get around the house through the drifts, but she learned the spot where they had placed the supports, and she could go and rest her face against the corresponding place inside."

Have we not here a *Stabat Mater* of as sharp an agony as that which Mary bore when she stood the cross beside?

"Only women understand children thoroughly," says Rudyard Kipling; "but if a mere man keeps himself quiet and refrains from talking down to his superiors, the children will sometimes be good to him and let him know what they think about the world."

Surely our own Howells must have fulfilled these conditions, for to me there is no sweeter child in fiction than little Effie Bowen in his "Indian Summer." There is something so charming in her mixture of naïveté and unconsciousness, she combines so sweetly the graces of society with what is best in the simple nature of a child.

But let her speak for herself in an expres-

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sion of one of those vague fancies for some one much older than herself which so often evidence the first timid flutterings of a girl's heart:

"I think Mr. Colville is about the pleasantest gentleman that comes here—don't you, mamma? He's so interesting, and says such nice things. I don't know whether children ought to think of such things, but I wish I was going to marry some one like Mr. Colville—of course, I should want to be tolerably old. How old do you think a person ought to be to marry him?"

"You mustn't talk of such things, Effie," said her mother. "No, I suppose it isn't very nice," replied the child.

What a pity that Mamma Bashkirtseff had not administered some such wholesome snubbing to the precocious Maria, or is it safer in these fancies, as in measles, to have them come well out?

Howells' master, Tolstoi, in the stolen interview between Anna Karenina and her Serozsha, proves himself to have been ten-

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derly observant of the winning ways of the little Tolstois. He writes: "At the right of the door was a bed, and on the bed a child was sitting in his little open nightgown, his little body was leaning forward, and he was just finishing a yawn and stretching himself. His lips were closing into a sleepy smile, and he fell back upon his pillow, still smiling. 'Serozsha!' she whispered in the child's ear. He raised himself on his elbow, turned his frowzy head around, and opening wide his eyes, half closed in sleep, threw himself into his mother's arms. 'Mamma!' he whispered; and smiling sleepily, climbed into her lap, and with that warm breath peculiar to children, pressed his face to her neck and shoulders."

Oh, Anna, how could you let the length of his father's ears or the beguiling tongue of Vrouskey separate you from such a child!

Oh, Tolstoi, how could the hand that drew a cherub like this lend itself to the painting of such a satyr as the hero of the "Kreutzer Sonata"!

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The lack of humor in children seems to confirm the theory that the individual presents an epitome of the development of the race.

A capacity for displaying and enjoying humor is certainly not found in savage tribes, and children seldom possess any natural facility in this direction.

Fun may be made *of* them, and *for* them, not often *by* them, and few of the juvenile characters in fiction are otherwise than accidentally and unconsciously humorous.

Two of the boys drawn by Mark Twain form an exception in this respect, and seem to have inherited the waggishness which distinguishes our great American humorist.

Andrew Lang says of them: "I, for one, feel that I have at least two friends across the sea, Master Thomas Sawyer and his friend Huckleberry Finn.

Though Mrs. Ewing is reported by her sister as enjoying, even in her last illness, the pranks of Huckleberry Finn, it is difficult to understand how they could be as

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nearly to her taste as the more natural ebullitions of Tom Sawyer.

Tom had been sentenced by his Aunt Polly to whitewash her fence by way of punishment, and took up his brush and went tranquilly to work.

“Ben Rogers hove in sight presently, the very boy of all boys whose ridicule he most dreaded, and said: ‘Hello, old chap! you got to work, hey?’

“Tom whirled suddenly, and said: ‘Why, it’s you, Ben; I warn’t noticing.’

“‘Say, I’m going in a-swimming, I am. Don’t you wish you could? But I suppose you’d rather work, wouldn’t you? Course you would.’ Tom contemplated the boy a bit, and said: ‘What do you call work?’

“‘Why, ain’t that work?’ Tom resumed his whitewashing, and answered, carelessly: ‘Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain’t. All I know is, it suits Tom Sawyer.’

“‘Oh, come now, you don’t mean to let on that you *like* it?’ The brush continued to move.

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“ ‘Like it? Well, I don’t see why I oughtn’t to like it? Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?’

“That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped nibbling his apple. Tom swept his brush daintily back and forth, stepped back to note the effect, Ben watching every move, and getting more and more interested.

“Presently he said: ‘Say, Tom, let me whitewash a little.’ Tom considered, was about to consent, but he altered his mind.

“No, no; I reckon it would not hardly do, Ben. You see Aunt Polly’s awful particular about this fence—right here on the street, you know; but if ’twas the back fence, I wouldn’t mind, and she wouldn’t. Yes, she’s awful particular about this fence; it’s got to be done very careful. I reckon there ain’t one boy in a thousand—maybe two thousand—that can do it the way it’s got to be done.’

“ ‘No! is that so? Oh, come now, lemme just try. Only just a little. I’d let you, if you was me, Tom.’

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“ ‘Ben, I’d like to, honest Injun, but Aunt Polly—well, Jim wanted to do it, and she wouldn’t let him; Sid wanted to do it, and she wouldn’t let Sid. Now, don’t you see how I’m fixed? If you was to tackle this fence, and anything was to happen to it?’

“ ‘Oh, shucks! I’ll be just as careful! Now, lemme try. Say, I’ll give you the core of my apple.’

“ ‘Well, here. No, Ben, don’t—I’m afeard—’

“ ‘I’ll give you all of it.’

“Tom gave up the brush, with reluctance in his face, but alacrity in his heart.

“Ben worked and worked in the sun, while the retired artist sat on a barrel in the shade close by and planned the slaughter of more innocents.

“There was no lack of material; boys happened along every little while; they came to jeer, but remained to whitewash.

“By the time Ben was fagged out, Tom had traded the next chance to Billy Fish

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for a kite in good repair; and when he played out, Johnny Miller bought in for a one-eyed kitten, and so on, and so on."

And when the middle of the afternoon came, from being a poor, poverty-stricken boy in the morning, "Tom was the proud possessor of twelve marbles, part of a jews-harp, a piece of blue glass to look through, a spool cannon, a key that wouldn't unlock anything, a piece of chalk, a glass stopper of a decanter, a couple of tadpoles, six fire-crackers, a brass doorknob, a dog-collar, but no dog, the handle of a knife, four pieces of orange-peel, and a dilapidated old window-sash."

I have been much impressed in my late reading by the fact that throughout the course of fiction childish forms have been made to serve as lay figures on which is fitted every phase of religious belief.

Thanks to the cheapening of material, the children of to-day need no longer be arrayed in the made-over garments of their elders, but what shall we say of the cruelty which

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would force upon their young natures the swaddling-bands of "a creed outworn"?

By one of those vagaries of preservation, of which so many ludicrous instances were furnished by our great fire, the flood of years, in sweeping from me so much of greater value, has left to me my first story-book.

This it is which I hold in my hand, that you may smile with me at this very protoplasm of juvenile literature.

It is the "History of Giles Gingerbread," and its title stands first in the list of juvenile books published by John Newbery in St. Paul's churchyard in the year 1765.

Its hero is a little boy, who, seeing Sir Toby Wilson drive by with his coach and four, beseeches his father to teach him how he too may attain to one.

The paternal precepts which follow force upon the boy a Jewish gabardine, so accurate is their presentation of the connection between well-doing and worldly prosperity which marks the Proverbs of Solomon, and

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indeed the entire teachings of the Old Testament.

For Ellen Montgomery, the young heroine of "The Wide, Wide World," is refashioned the straight gown and poke bonnet of a Methodist class-leader. The rereading of no book after the lapse of years has marked for me so entire a change in my moral and mental attitude as that of this favorite of my girlhood.

Can it be that I once held the garments of Ellen's mother while she hurled at her poor child the reproach of having a mind hardened by sin, and a heart irreconciled to God?

And this while the dear little girl was trying bravely to bear the great sorrow of her mother's mortal illness and looking lovingly and trustingly to her heavenly Father for help in her sore need.

Would not Mrs. Montgomery have been wiser to have economized her short breath for the utterance of a few plain precepts against the falling into confidential relations

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with strange young men on steamboats, emphasized with kisses and embraces?

And what shall we say of John Humphreys, the lightning converter, and Ellen's prompt acceptance of his plan of salvation?

As I lately read of this, I saw as a fitting close to the first act of this religious, sentimental drama, the youthful pair capering hand in hand down to the footlights, while they joined in singing that exultant chorus of the Sankey hymn which runs: "We've done it, done it, done it, done it! We've done it, done it now!"

An English critic declares that there is more kissing in one of Miss Wetherell's novels than in all of Sir Walter Scott's put together, and adds that "from these pictures of life young people have reason to conclude that if they are very good and very pious and very busy in doing grown-up work, when they reach the age of sixteen some young gentleman who has been in love with them all the time will declare himself, and

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they may then look to find themselves, all the struggles of life over, reposing a weary head on his stalwart shoulder for the rest of their days."

While the boys and girls of Miss Yonge's Church of England novels are allowed to wear the regulation bib and pinafore of the English nursery and schoolroom, to the breast of each is affixed the red cross of ecclesiasticism, and they march as steadily after this emblem as did the martyred innocents of "The Children's Crusade."

Very gentle and refined, very sweet and saintly are these children of hers, in spite of their stained-glass attitudes, and we willingly accept them as exponents of one phase of Christianity.

But must we concede to them the monopoly of correct religious training? Can no good come to any childish soul except through the Sacraments of the Established Church?

Indeed, the perfect familiarity with which these young folks handle the doctrines of

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the church sometimes makes us feel that they must have been trained to chant the Thirty-nine Articles as we American children used to sing the capitals of our States.

The doctrine of baptismal regeneration is brought into special prominence, and there is something amusingly naive in the way in which the youthful mother in "Heart's Ease" says, while looking at her baby after his christening, "I was thinking how very good he is!"

I hope I shall not be considered irreverent or unmindful of what I was taught to believe of covenant blessings bestowed in baptism on the children of believing parents if I tell just here a little story prepared by the "This reminds me" of Abraham Lincoln.

A young father, speaking of his month-old boy, once said to me: "Oh, Mrs. Smith, I wish you could see how brave that little boy of ours is! Why, when we know that he has the most dreadful stomach-ache he just puts up his little lip and tries not to cry!"

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But if we find occasion to smile at some of the characteristics of Miss Yonge's novels, how many of us have shed torrents of tears over the beautiful life and early death of "Heir of Redcliffe?" It would be surely a moderate estimate, allowing the small average of two weepers to each volume, the eight thousand copies of this work already issued must have brought into requisition no less than sixteen thousand pocket-handkerchiefs for the wiping of thirty-two thousand weeping eyes.

My own criticism upon the form of family life presented by Miss Yonge is that it affords a model of what Ruskin calls a regular and sweet selfishness, and tends to confine the dream of love and sympathy to the watering of a small garden-plot, instead of letting it make glad the great city of our God.

At the risk of overworking the comparison between the religious teachings imposed on children and the garments bestowed on them, I must speak a few words in praise of

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the garb in which Mrs. Ewing arrays her juveniles.

No attempt is made to force upon them the uniform of any sect, they lend their names to no fashion of hose and doublet, but stand before us in raiment convenient for them. Some in the everyday garb of good habits, and others in the fair, white linen of an entirely attainable degree of childish saintliness.

To be converted and become as little Leonard, the hero of the story of a "Short Life" would seem to many of us altogether lovely, and to be desired, but what shall we say of a possible conversion into a Little Lord Fauntleroy?

Some of the minor characters of Mrs. Ewing's stories are scarcely less interesting than those which occur more readily to the memory.

One finds so rarely in children's books such plain advice as to small faults as that to Selina by her godmother in the story called "A Bad Habit."

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"There are," says the old lady, "two things, Selina, against your growing up good-looking. One is that you have caught so many vulgarisms from the servants, and the other your bad habit of grumbling.

"Underbred and illy educated women are as a rule much less good-looking than well-bred and highly educated ones. A girl who was never taught to brush her teeth, to breathe through her nostrils instead of her lips, and to chew with the back teeth instead of the front has a very small chance of growing up with a pretty mouth; and constant grumbling makes an ugly underlip, a forehead wrinkled with frowning, and dull eyes that see nothing but grievances."

And here is a wonderful picture of an English *enfant terrible*.

"When the good couple received their friends at home there was no escape from Amelia.

"If it was a dinner party, she came in with the dessert, or perhaps sooner.

"She would take up her position near

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some one, and either lean heavily against his knee or climb into his lap without invitation.

“She would break into the most interesting discussion with her own childish affairs, in the following style:

“ ‘I’ve been out to-day—I’ve walked to town—I jumped over three brooks. Can you jump? Papa gave me sixpence to-day—I’m saving my money to be rich, Mr. Brown. Mr. Brown, don’t talk to mamma, but peel me an orange. Mr. Brown, I’m playing with your finger-glass!’

“And when at last the finger-glass, filled with cold water, had been upset on Mr. Brown’s shirt-front, Amelia’s mamma would cry out, ‘Oh, dear—r, Amelia!’ and carry her off with the ladies to the drawing-room.”

And again, who has not seen children subjected to that most objectionable of jokes, the parody of love affairs in connection with them, and does not sympathize with Leo when the elderly Miss Benton calls him her

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little sweetheart, and her brother wags his hand of a morning with "How's Miss Eliza's little beau?"

Polly, in a "Flat-Iron for a Farthing," makes an utterance which may well give us cause for thought.

"It seems to be just all the heap of people who are only a little religious who never get any good out of it. It isn't enough to make them happy, whatever happens, and it is just enough to make them uncomfortable if they play cards on a Sunday."

The children of Mrs. Ewing's stories are object-lessons in the process and effect of the domestic training which Dr. Bushnell records as that adopted by his own mother. Of this he writes: "Her stress was laid on industry, order, fidelity, neatness, truth, and prayer, and the rule of the house; in these was to be the hope, in a great measure, of religion. She," he continues, "condescended to stay for the most part in matters of habit in her humanly allotted field, but

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keeping constantly an upward look that what she should so prepare in righteous habit should be a house builded for occupancy of the Spirit. 'First the blade, then the ear, afterward the full corn in the ear.' "

Surely this is the evolution which we are to expect from the application of natural law in the spiritual world.

But as Kipling has it, the babies "trot at the tail of every procession," and the one which I have marshaled to-day, as headed by the infant Astyanax, must be closed by the uncertain steps of a few chosen from recent literature.

That babies are all alike is the dictum of only those who have never studied their points; and who but the grumpiest old bachelor could mix up such distinctive specimens as we can all recall?

Three of them, Ginx's, Bootles', and Mrs. Bibs', have given their names to as many volumes, and where shall we find a more pronounced identity than in that babe of

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Mrs. Poyser's who knew its own mind with such remarkable clearness?

The gipsy baby in Mrs. Ewing's "Lob"—lie by the fire—begins his conflict with conventionalities by a hand-to-hand struggle with his cap; and who does not remember Tommy Luck, of "Roaring Camp," as he rassels with the finger of his friend of Kentucky?

See him lying on a blanket in the gulch while the miners are working in the ditches below:

He was always tractable and quiet, and it is recorded that having once crept beyond his corral—a hedge of tasseled pine-boughs which surmounted his bed—he dropped over the bank on his head in the soft earth, and remained with his mottled legs in the air in that position for at least five minutes with unflinching gravity.

"I crep' up the bank just now," said Kentucky one day, in a breathless state of excitement, "and dern my skin if he wasn't talking to a jay-bird as was a-sittin' on his lap.

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There they was, just as free and sociable as anything you please, a-jawin' at each other like two cherry-bums."

Although St. Paul's attitude toward women would scarcely suggest him as a patron saint of the Fortnightly, I may here remind you of the outburst at the close of his chronicle of the heroes of faith. "And what shall I more say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Bariah, and of Samson, and of Jephthah, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets?"

So I lament that after the marshaling of more than fifty children, time fails me to tell of Rosamund and her purple jar, of Tom Brown and Robert Falconer, of little Eva and her shadow Topsy, and the long line which might stretch on to the crack of doom.

But let just one more childish voice be heard; for though it is not the custom of the Fortnightly to close with a benediction, all hearts must respond to the spacious and all-embracing invocation of Tiny Tim, "God bless us every one."

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The short stories which we are just now all reading, with more or less interest and attention, resemble the persons whom we casually meet, chat with for a moment, and go on our way.

Some of them, having entertained us for the nonce, are forgotten, while others leave an impression which brings them often to our vivid and pleasurable recollection.

The secret of this abiding interest is not always easy to formulate.

In the case of persons it seems usually to spring from some charm of face or manner or from an impression of unfathomed depths of sympathy or character, while the claim of a story on our attention is generally prolonged by the mode of its telling, a baffling

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mystery in plot, or some startling surprise in its dénouement.

As pronounced examples of these distinct forms of interest let me cite "An Autumn Holiday," by Sarah Jewett, as excelling in literary style; "The Other Woman" of Richard Harding Davis in the enchanting power of mystery, and Aldrich's "Marjorie Daw" in the stroke of its final surprise.

The slight sketch of Sarah Jewett is almost destitute of plot, and is little more than a transcript of a mood of nature and the mind of its writer, yet how persistently recurring is its picture.

How often has the dying spark of dinner-table talk been quickened by the mention of "The Other Woman," and to how many of us has the simple sentence, "There isn't any Marjorie Daw!" come with something of the shock and chill of a shower-bath!

So nearly universal is the acquaintance with the characters of this form of fiction that one may be oblivious of Daniel Deronda, forgetful of John Ward, and even careless

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of Robert Elsmere, while not to know Gallagher and Van Bibber is indeed crass ignorance.

As has been well said, "A short story is neither an expanded anecdote nor an arrested novel," differing as it does from the one in its capacity for extension in detail, and from the other in the comparative simplicity of its plot.

The motif of the novel being generally complex, and thus capable of more variety in conditioning and characterization, opportunity is given for those details and explanations which, like the chorus of a Greek tragedy, serve at the same time to inform the audience and to carry on the action.

The story, on the contrary, being usually founded on a phase or episode, allows of few digressions and requires a swift directness of movement toward the goal of its conclusion.

So little opportunity is given for the gradual development of character that we are required to accept that of its personages

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as fully formed and as evidenced by their conduct in a special situation or crisis.

Such features of their environment as are required must be sparingly and incidentally presented, and even the enlivenment of conversation is necessarily restricted.

A tendency to supply its lack by colloquialisms and dialect is so markedly on the increase as, according to James Russell Lowell, to "suggest garlic," and much of our recent reading bears an impression of one having made an effort to acquire volapuk or planned an excursion to the Tower of Babel.

And yet in spite of these limitations, or it may be in consequence of them, the writers of short stories have at their command all the conditions of the most perfect art.

Their work is performed under a single impulse, is subject to no subdivision of interest, and moves toward a natural and definite conclusion.

One of the characters in Henry Fuller's "Chatelaine of La Trinite" thus justifies his

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declared intention never to write anything that could not be gotten through during an afternoon in a garden or a single evening over the fire.

“He remarked that this was one respect in which the coming fiction might well imitate a picture or a symphony. Now, one’s appreciation of a picture was practically instantaneous, one might follow the whole course of a symphony in twenty or thirty minutes. But to become familiar with a book required two or three days or a month, as the art of the writer or the interest of the reader determined. The idea of form suffered, the sense of proportion was dulled, the congruity and cohesiveness of the idea was impaired.”

Or, in simple language (because my own), the companion of a stroll needs only to suit himself to the mood of a single hour, while that of a walking tour must be capable of responding to the changing humors of many successive days.

With due respect to the balance of ad-

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vantage, most prominent writers of fiction have chosen to exhibit their skill in the employment of both forms, many of them using the short story as a trial flight before attempting the wider sweep of a novel.

An equal excellence in them is rare, the short stories of Bret Harte, Sarah Jewett, and Rudyard Kipling being distinctly superior to their longer works, while the minor productions of Dickens, Thackeray, and Hawthorne are wellnigh forgotten in the sustained interest of their novels.

Henry James alone occurs to me as a writer whose skill in the use of both forms is so pronounced that it is difficult to decide in which he has achieved his greatest success.

But as the tiny star of the snowdrop is as perfect a flower as the creamy disc of the Victoria Regia, so a distinct excellence in the use of the minor form justifies a claim to be a genuine artist and entitles to membership in a literary guild of rapidly increasing numbers and reputation.

The student of literature will not be slow

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to discover that the intellectual expression of each period seems to be in a great measure determined by its material conditions.

Thus the splendid and spectacular age of Queen Elizabeth developed the drama, the religious struggle of the commonwealth suggested the stately form of the epic, the elegant leisure of the reign of Queen Anne led to the elaboration of the essay, and the duller court of George III. demanded the prolonged enlivenment of the three-volumed novel.

What wonder that the rush and hurry of our later American life should create a demand for an intellectual food as capable of being snatched and bolted as a railway sandwich! Or, as has been aptly said, "Since he who reads *must* run, therefore write so that he who runs *may* read."

If our forbears found in the novels of Sir Walter Scott something as staying and satisfying as were the simple joints of their daily diet, may not we characterize these piquant and unsatisfying productions as

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intellectual entrées, and deprecate their result in the creation of a mental dyspepsia which must ultimately destroy the relish for less stimulating food?

As entertainment is the primary object, the craving for amusement, which is so marked a feature of our modern life, has been a powerful factor in the creation of a demand which has received the usual response of a proportionate supply.

Numerous syndicates exist which, by the purchase of them in manuscript, act as middlemen between their authors and publishers. They form the entire contents of several magazines, and a recent notice in the London *Athenæum* of a volume written by Marjorie, aged nine, and dedicated to "papa and mamma," proves that even child labor is enlisted in this production.

Mrs. Stowe writes to George Eliot, "So many stories go tramping through our minds in the magazines nowadays that they are, so to speak, macadamized," and we may esteem it fortunate for our national literary

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taste and reputation that the standard of their acceptableness as maintained by our American editors is exceptionally high.

So confessedly are they the distinctive form of the literary activity of our day and our country that it may seem strange to some of you to know that a few of us can recall a time when we were compelled to depend for them, as well as for many other luxuries, on foreign importation.

In those days a row of cloth-bound, somber-hued volumes coldly furnished forth the colorless tales in which the Lady of the Manor essayed to impress certain points of creed and doctrine, while the genius of Mrs. Opie took a more practical turn in an effort to show in a series of short tales the various forms in which, like our modern malaria, the ancient sin of lying is wont to take shape.

So didactic is the tone of these old-time stories, so plainly do we smell the mold of instruction above the rose of entertainment, that they seem to form direct links in the chain of evolution from the fables and

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moralties of an earlier date, and as little likely to be the chosen companions of an idle hour as such mortuary leaflets as "The Young Cottager" or "The Dairyman's Daughter."

Like that of these well-known tales, their atmosphere and nomenclature is foreign and unfamiliar, for it is not until the present century is well advanced toward its second decade that we come upon any distinctively American short stories.

At this time there began to gleam from the polished surface of the claw-footed tables of our grandmothers those red-and-gold volumes which, under the name of *Annals*, served as the earliest repository for them.

"I have found out a gift for my fair!" cried the lover of the period, as he hastened to lay at the feet of his *Dulcinea* one of the amaranths, forget-me-nots, or garlands of friendship which suddenly brightened the literary field—short-lived flowers, blossoming bravely in the sunshine of a fleeting favor, to die through the long years since,

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faded and neglected, in the dimness of those New England book-cupboards.

In the year 1840 there came from Philadelphia, then an acknowledged literary center, a noticeable impulse to this form of composition in the offer of two of its leading periodicals, *Godey's Lady's Book*, and *Graham's Magazine*, of twelve dollars a page for contributions in prose or verse.

This, for that day, munificent recompense set in motion the pens of our ready writers, with a result by no means calculated to increase our respect for the literary taste and attainments of the period.

Listen to this sprightly conversation extracted from a *Lady's Book* story of fifty years ago: " 'Careless, light-hearted childhood!' murmured Miss Sedley; 'oh, that for one little hour I could recall the happiness of that blessed period!'

" 'Ah, dear Frances!' replied Miss Preston, 'through all our lives a bountiful Providence scatters the materials of happiness; is it not our own fault if we fail to

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combine them to produce it?' " And so these giddy young women have it back and forth for page after page of similar and much overpaid platitudes.

Amid the general dullness of these early magazine stories those of Eliza Leslie show occasional glimpses of a brightness in dialogue and in originality of plot which place them distinctly in advance of the writings of her contemporaries.

Miss Leslie, also the author of a "Behavior Book" and "Manual of Cookery," in pursuance of their tendencies, gives us in her tales a glimpse of the formality and epicureanism which distinguish her native city of Philadelphia, and does not hesitate to express in them her strongest local prejudices.

In one, the heroine, Mrs. Woodbridge, is a New York belle, who, on attaining to the proud privilege of marriage to a model of a young man of Philadelphia, sacrifices the credit of his dinner-parties and the comfort of his home to her inborn love for ex-

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travagant toilettes. And in another, to the superficial education acquired at a New York boarding-school is attributed the ignorance of Eliza Farnham, whose first letter to her fiancé, a young gentleman of Boston, being modeled on those borrowed from her grandmother's and Belinda, the cook, results in the breaking of her engagement.

An accidental sight of a later letter written by Eliza after a year of study in the literary atmosphere of Philadelphia brings the lover back to his allegiance, and a gorgeous wedding follows.

Over the marriage-feast we discern the trail of the cook-book, in the mention, as its crowning ornament, of a watermelon preserved whole by the grandmother of the bride, that estimable old lady whose culinary skill seems to have so far exceeded her epistolary talent.

The most popular magazine writer of this period was Nathaniel Parker Willis, the son of a Boston deacon, who, supplementing his New England education by foreign travel,

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acquired a certain quaintness of style which gives interest to his stories of life at Nahant, Saratoga, and Ballston Spa, the fashionable watering-places of the time.

Nearly contemporaneous with these, but sharply contrasted in style, are the gruesome tales of Edgar Poe, which anticipated the scientific hoaxes of Jules Verne and the detective stories of Wilkie Collins and Anna Katherine Green. The moral purpose, which was entirely lacking in them, appears very distinctly in the anonymous collection somewhat later under the name of the "Saxe Holms Stories," while the "Diamond Laws" of Fitz-James O'Brien and Harriet Prescott Spofford's "In a Cellar" imitate their analytic and highly imaginative style.

During the years in which our national literature was reaching this stage of its development, from the bitter root of sectional prejudice the red flower of battle was preparing to burst into bloom, and the breaking out of our Civil War absorbed for a time the public interest to the exclusion of anything

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less stirring than war songs or military dispatches.

In the darkest hour of this struggle Edward Everett Hale, by his powerful story of "The Man without a Country," gave such an impulse to the latent patriotism of his countrymen as many of us have felt at the sudden sight of its stars and stripes bravely floating among the alien colors of a foreign port.

Doubtless some of you can recall the sensation produced by this clever story of Philip Nolan's rash denunciation of his country and its bitter punishment, and how its verisimilitude caused many persons to accept it as a record of facts. Mr. Hale's crowning excellence as a story-teller is a management of details and allusions which gives an air of truth to his most improbable narrations, and helps us to believe that Frederic Ingham may really have been undone by his "double," or, as is claimed in his "Skeleton in the Closet," the ruin of the best laid schemes of the generals of the

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Confederacy was brought about by the cast-off hoopskirts of its women.

The axiom that a period of national conflict is always followed by one of literary activity holds good in our own time and land, for the writers of short stories who appeared as single spies before our Civil War began after its close to muster in battalions. So that from this date I must treat them topographically rather than chronologically, and you must no longer sit as the spectators of a panoramic succession, but change your point of view for that of those before whom the exhibitor of a cyclo-rama points out the separate localities of a simultaneous action and interest.

Such a survey is facilitated for us by the recent habit of literary preëmption by right of which each writer asserts a special claim to the section originally selected as the scene of his incidents.

This intense localization lends itself to the methods of the realists, and brings into prominence the distinctive element of recog-

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nition which with them has superseded that of surprise as employed by the Romanticists. The pleasure which we find in this seems to be akin to the feeling which makes us view with more interest a photograph of a well-known scene than one which portrays an unvisited scene.

The arguments for and against these sectional divisions are those which apply to the work of specialists in every direction, the chief evidence in their favor being the noticeable falling off in the work of those who forsake their original locality for fresh fields and pastures new. A marked instance of this may be recognized in Bert Harte's failure to deal successfully with any life but that of the mining camps of California, and a later one is presented in Marie Wilkins's excursions into No Man's Land in the track of Tourguenieff.

Its best result for us is the addition to our literature of a graphic record of the minutest peculiarities of each section of our broad land. This record goes far to confute Pro-

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fessor Bryce's somewhat shallow criticism of the monotony of our American life, for no attentive reader of short stories can fail to recognize a wide variety of character and incident under a superficial uniformity.

Witness, for example, the chronicles of New England as furnished by those who have taken up their claims in that land of steady habits and strong prejudices, that paradise of small incomes and purgatory of restless spirits.

That women form the majority of these doubtless arises from the fact that they recognize most readily the possibilities of the existence of romance under prosaic conditions, and have a sure sympathy with the tragedies which have their origin in the struggles of a sensitive conscience, or the crushing out of natural instincts and affections.

Perhaps the chief production of New England might be designated as spinsters, and to *few* men has it been given to recognize its varied types, or to discern on their

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smoothly disposed locks as visible an aureole as ever crowned a Romish St. Agnes.

Sarah Jewett and Marie Wilkins have been especially tender and reverent in their treatment of these unwedded ones, and chief among them in subtle charm stands the heroine of Miss Jewett's tale of a "Lost Lover."

Miss Horatia Dam has for long years been hallowed by the tender sympathy of her friends in the supposed loss at sea of the lover of her youth. The ruthless breaking of his enshrined image by the appearance at her door of a worthless tramp in whom she alone recognizes the gallant sailor of her early romance is almost heart-breaking in its pathos.

In the simple words of the story: "Nobody noticed much change in Miss Horatia, but Melissa saw that the whale's tooth had disappeared from its place on her mantel, and her old friend said she began to show her age a good deal, and wasn't the woman she had been a year ago."

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Miss Wilkins's Ann Millet finds a less disappointing object of love in her cat Willy, of whom she says: "I've got my Bible and Willy, and a good many folks has to be alone as far as other folks is consairned on this airth. And perhaps some other woman ain't lonesome because I am, and maybe she'd be one of the kind that didn't like cats, and so wouldn't have got along as well as me."

But alas! we all know how swiftly these perfunctorily raised Ebenezers are laid low by the first blast of real trouble, and can be patient with poor Ann, when, at the temporary loss of her wandering Willy, she bursts out in this wise:

"I haven't never had anything like other women, but I did want as much as a cat! I've never thought I'd ought to begrudge other women their homes and their folks; I thought perhaps I could get along without 'em better than some, and the Lord knowed it, and seeing there wasn't enough of 'em to go round, He gave 'em to them as needed

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'em most. But there was cats enough! I might have had as much as a cat!"

Within the sisterhood of spinsters we all recognize two distinct varieties—those who, remaining unwed from necessity rather than from inclination, make of their celibacy a crown of thorns for themselves and a scourge of small cords for their neighbors, and those happier ones who, like the New England nun of Miss Wilkins, being formed by nature for a single life, accept it as a vocation and find in it the calm seclusion of a cloister.

But the experiences of these unwedded ones do not always run in the groove of sentiment, as witness that of the Dulham ladies, whom Sarah Jewett portrays as buying those preposterous frizzes from a beguiling French hairdresser, and Miss Wilkins's sport of Candace Whitcomb's indignant rejection of the gift of a red velvet photograph album intended as a solace in her dismissal from the village choir.

"I dun no," she says, "but it would be

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a good plan to send everybody, as soon as they git a little old and young folks begin to push in, to a desert island, and give 'em each a photograph album. Then they could sit and look at pictures for the rest of their days. Mebbe government would take it up." Surely this is speech seasoned with pepper, instead of the apostolically commended salt!

It is scarcely possible to cite these stories of Miss Jewett and Miss Wilkins without an attempt to strike the balance of their charm and power.. To me the literary style of each seems to present the characteristics of the personages whom she portrays most successfully.

Sarah Jewett, being a member of the Brahmin class of New England, has the natural sympathy of an aristocrat for the extremes of society, and depicts with equal skill the life of the dwellers in those great white houses which Holmes likens to "boulders of civilization left by the retreating tide of commerce" and that of the sailors who

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loiter about the wharves of those decaying seaports.

Her diction is as simple as their manners, as free from pretense and artificiality as their lives, and we rise from the reading of her stories with a feeling of having rested for an hour in one of those dim and sacred parlors, or floated lazily in the dory of some sun-browned fisherman.

Miss Wilkins's style is by contrast brusque and incisive as that of the company to which she introduces us, this being chiefly made up of village-folk of more sharply defined and much less lovable personality than the characters of Miss Jewett.

While both exhibit marked humor, a wide difference exists in its quality, that of Miss Jewett, as shown in such stories as "News from Petersham" and "The Courting of Sister Wisely" being far more delicate than the broad comicality of Miss Wilkins's "A Mistaken Charity," with those two old women flying like scared hens over the bounds of the old ladies' home.

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It is noticeable that in scarcely any of Miss Wilkins's stories do we come upon any mention of "help" in domestic service, and this lack may account for the rasped nerves and fretful utterances of those drudging and overworked women.

Of one of these Rose Terry Cooke touchingly says: "She had already the line of care which marks so many New England women, across the forehead, like the mark of Cain, the signal of a life in which work has murdered health and joy and freedom."

The lonely and isolated lives of many of these women, whose social opportunities Kate Sanborn declares to be limited to a few months' stay in an insane asylum, tends to develop what has been well called "a crazy conscience," and this element of tragedy appears repeatedly in the stories of Miss Wilkins.

It is a lamentable truth that the migration of the Puritan fathers with intent to escape from the tyranny of the Old World resulted in the ultimate establishment of as pro-

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nounced a despotism in their New England homes; for, if we may accept their pictures as presented by Miss Wilkins, the domestic tyrant is one of their most marked features.

She has collected for us every imaginable species of this most objectionable genus, among which the stubbornly vindictive husband in the story of "Gentian," the no less tyrannical wife of "The Kitchen Colonel," the thrifty farmer who forced "The Revolt of Mother," and the cruel daughter of "The Village Lea" are easily recurring examples. I know a young girl to whom these pictures are so painful that she finds no pleasure in the skill with which they are painted, and turns from them with the horror with which we view the revolting subjects chosen by some of the modern French figure painters.

In a recently published volume, called "Pratt Portraits Sketched in a New England Suburb," we find another and less depressing variety of life.

We all know the kind of homes in which

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this immense Pratt family enjoys a limited but entirely satisfied prosperity, houses with frequent and aggressive bow-windows, an occasional aspiration in the form of a cupola, and front yards whose proudest adornment is a swinging dinner-pot filled with a jarring color combination of scarlet geraniums and crimson petunias.

Anna Fuller's portraits of their occupants suggest those which we should expect to find hanging on these walls, stiff copies of prosaic men and women, from which all charm of personality has been omitted, leaving a possibly lifelike but by no means living picture.

In one of them, however, we recognize a quality which compels our admiration—that of "The Yankee Quixote."

Its hero, a conservative Unionist, feeling, in the agitated days just before our Civil War, that the village prayer-meeting is serving as a place for the expression of partisan feeling, startles his townsmen by making there this temperate and impartial petition:

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"Almighty God, we pray Thee to deliver the North from the calamities which we dread, and we pray Thee to deliver our sister, the South, from the vengeance which we threaten. Change the hearts of the North and the South, and lead us in the way of equity and peace."

When, at the news of the firing on Fort Sumter, he was among the first to enlist, his brother Pratts, who had suspected him of a sympathy with secession, received this simple explanation of his unexpected patriotism:

"I suppose you can imagine the case of mother's getting into a dispute with a neighbor, and your admitting that he was as much in the right as she; but if he was to lift his hand against her, I reckon you wouldn't think twice before you knocked him down."

The vignette of a full-rigged ship and a meeting-house which adorns the cover of the *New England Magazine* would serve as well for a volume of the stories of Eliza-

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beth Phelps Ward, for she depicts with equal skill the New England specialties of sailors and ministers.

Her long residence in the theological center of Andover has familiarized her with clerical peculiarities, and the fighting parson of her "Fourteen to One," the stately president of St. Basil's, and the Reverend Eliakim are so distinct in personality that each is readily recognized as a study from life.

Her pictures of the life of the fishermen of New England are full of the wild motion of the sea, and in her touching story of "The Madonna of the Tubs" we feel the equal burden of the men who work and the women who weep.

From fishermen we come by direct apostolic succession to theology, and that of New England has found an industrious exponent in Anna Trumbull Slosson.

I hesitate in speaking of her stories from a consciousness of what Anatole France calls "the impossibility of objective criticism," and a fear lest the impression which they

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make upon me individually may warp my estimate of their literary merit.

Their personages have, in my judgment, a fantastic quality which makes them seem like mummers rather than actors, and I cannot regard their experiences as having much closer connection with actual life than those of Christian in his allegorical journey. Like John Bunyan, Mrs. Slosson seems to have had in mind certain points of religious doctrine and experience, and to have so evidently framed her stories to suit the purpose of their explication that in only two of them have I been able to discover much genuine human interest.

"Fishin' Jimmy" is, of course, one of these, but "Aunt Randy" is less known, and in spite of its entire unlikelihood, furnishes a striking allegory of the resurrection.

Aunt Randy, after the death of her only child, Jacob, strives to solace herself by the dumb companionship of a caterpillar which she calls by his name, and when this, after the instinct of its kind, digs a grave and hides

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itself in it, is entirely desolate and despairing.

But in her touching words: "One day I see a little crack come on it, and Jacob was coming to life again, and oh! I can't tell you how I felt when I saw him come out of his grave and fly around my room, nor how I cried right out loud as I see it: 'Why not my boy, too! Oh, Lord! you can do that just as well as this!'"

To me the most charming feature of Mrs. Slosson's stories is the taste of "Flora and the country green" which flavors them all, and her loving familiarity with the secrets of New England woods, secrets of beauty and of balm.

While the religious tendencies of New England seem in some cases inclined to dissolve in mists of speculation, and in others to crystallize into bowlders of dogma, we find in the stories of Rose Terry Cooke the happy expression of faith by works which marks the latest and most practical form of Christianity.

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Her recent death seems to hallow her name among those which we "speak softly as that of one whom God has taken," and gives a peculiar emphasis to those qualities in her work which make it worthy to "abide in the day when every man's shall be made manifest."

One of the best of her stories, "The Deacon's Week," has been published as a leaflet by the Boston Congregational Union, and I advise you all to "mark, learn, and inwardly digest" its practical teachings.

Her characters are less idealized than those of Miss Jewett and Miss Wilkins, their speech is homely to the verge of coarseness, and they make no secret of those small economies which the hard conditions of New England life make both necessary and honorable.

One of these, Amanda Hart, when setting off for a rare journey, thus confides to a neighbor: "I don't care for no breakfast; I should have to bile the kettle, and have a cup and a plate to wash up, and like

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enough the dish cloth'd get mildewy if I left it damp; I'll just take a dry bite in my clean handkerchief. I've eat up all my vittles but two cookies and a mite of cheese I've saved a puppus."

But I must ask you to exchange the grave quiet of the shadow of New England elms for the noise and glare of the city in a glance at its more complex life as presented by those writers who have chosen it as the scene of their incidents.

A superficial sameness characterizes many of them, for conventionality must always limit variety, but we find in each some of the peculiar features which distinguish its environment.

In Boston alone could have been gathered the heterogeneous dinner-parties of Hale's "His Level Best," only in the course of a banquet in Philadelphia could arrive the solemn moment of "terrapin-tasting" described in Janvier's "In the St. Peter's Set," and nowhere else than in the city of New York could have been devised the porten-

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tous imposition of Mr. Henry Bishop's "A Little Dinner."

That our own city has not been chosen as the background of any characteristic short story is perhaps due to the impression that any possible experience of its typical "Miss Breezy" would be better suited to point a moral than to adorn a tale.

Knowing his New York as Sam Johnson did his London, Richard Harding Davis is *facile princeps* of the metropolitan school of minor fiction.

Although he makes his native city of Philadelphia the scene of the adventure of his precocious and audacious Gallagher, the fame of this hero has been rivaled by that of his later creation, Van Bibber of New York. This Quixote of the club and the ballroom, always struggling between the narrowing traditions of his caste and the expanding impulses of a kindly heart, has for me a pronounced charm, and I love to follow his beneficent course as it leads him to sail in the swan-boat with these children

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of the slums, to make regular by his presence the clandestine marriage planned by his reckless young friend, or to bring the recreant father of the waif of the green-room to acknowledge his child.

This last story, "Her First Appearance," exhibits in a marked degree the one defect in Mr. Davis's otherwise delightful work, a tendency to improve the occasion, which sometimes takes the form of absolute and slightly tiresome preaching.

He seems too a trifle ungrateful to those promoters of his marked social success, the society women of New York, in the portraits he has given of them in several of his stories. Only in that of the heroine of "A Walk Up the Avenue," as she stands tremulous and tearful in that nook of Central Park, do we find an entirely pleasing one, and I count this story of the succeeding emotions of a single hour one of the most exquisitely finished of written pictures.

In three stories whose incidents occur in the Casa Napoleon, a Spanish-American

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hotel in the lower part of the city of New York, Thomas Janvier paints the foreign element which marks its cosmopolitanism, while a lower scheme of color characterizes his picture of the stately interiors of Philadelphia.

The best of these are "The Uncle of an Angel," "In the St. Peter's Set," and "The Passing of Thomas," the accuracy of which is unimpaired by the covert humor of their treatment, while the recurring appearance of such typical characters as Mr. Hutchinson Post and the Pennington Browns gives to them something of the effect of a serial.

We may well hesitate to exchange the terrapin and madeira of this exclusive circle for the mountain fare of our onward journey, but though we take the wings of a Pullman for our transit to other scenes, we are followed by the associations of the short story, for threads like those of Brander Matthews's "In the Vestibule Limited," Hale's "Western Ginevera," and Robert Meyers's "Fin de Siècle," with each passing mile.

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As we turn our faces toward the South, an overwhelming sense of its wide expanse comes upon us, and we stand bewildered by the number of the chronicles of its various physical and social characteristics.

All the conditions of romance exist in this broad land—the antebellum life of the Virginia plantation, with its close relation between master and slave; the wild adventures of the moonshiners; the conflicting political sympathies of the border states, and the terrible upheaval of the social conditions caused by our Civil War, have all lent themselves to heighten its possibilities, and been industriously used by the writers of short stories.

Among these the chronicles of Virginia have the precedence of primogeniture, and Frances Courtney Bayler, in a story called "In the Old Dominion," gives us a taste of the meat on which her statesmen fed to grow so great in honor and in patriotism.

It is contained in the catechism by which old Colonel Vesey supplements for his grand-

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son that of the Church of England, and stands in this wise: "What are you, my son? A gentleman. What is a gentleman? What does he do? Fears God, loves his country, tells the truth, respects women, pities the unfortunate, helps the needy, and does his duty." Can we doubt that such teachings helped to gain for this single state the honor of having given birth to George Washington the sword, Thomas Jefferson the pen, and Patrick Henry the tongue of our Revolution?

It has been said that the popular idea of the negro includes but the two extreme types, Uncle Tom and Jim Crow, but in the stories of Thomas Nelson Page we find many individuals who mark the steps of this gradation.

To the slave of former days his master was the unit which gave value to him, the cipher, and in Page's "Edinboro's Drowndin'" we have a typical and amusing expression of his identification as made by a servant who attends his young master at a ball.

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“Fust thing I know,” he says, “I seed a mighty likely colored gal a-standin’ dyah, and I say, ‘Lady, you look mighty sprightly to-night,’ and she say she bleegee to be sprightly, her missus look so good. I axe her which one ’twas, and she say dat queen one over dyah. I tell her dere’s a king one over dyah too what she got her cap set for, and she fly up and say her missus don’t have to set her cap for nobody, and dey ain’t studyin’ about no up-country folks what nobody knows nothing about. Well, that audaciousness so aggravate me that I lit into dat niggah right dyah. I tell her that she ain’t been nowhar if she don’t know we-all; dat we was the best quality, de berry top of the pot; and den I tell her how great we was, how de kerridges was always hitched up night and day, and niggers just as thick as weeds, and how we use gold up there like other folks use wood.

“Oh, I certainly ’stonish dat nigger, ’cause I taken up for de family; and when I got through, she say, ‘Massa George, he

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berry good, sure enough, if 'twan't for his nigger,' but I ain't terrify myself none 'bout dat."

To the credit of the negro race, we must allow that in many cases neither the knowledge of their freedom or the fallen fortunes of their masters availed to break the ties of a lifetime, and on the woolly heads of even such "ornery, no account" niggers as Joel Harris's Ananias, or James Lane Allen's King Solomon rest the halos of a noble and self-sacrificing devotion. The changed social conditions brought about by the Civil War have been touchingly shown by Mr. Allen in his "Two Gentlemen of Kentucky"; but it remained for a woman, Constance Fenimore Woolson, in her stories of "Rodman the Keeper" and "Old Gurdiston," to paint the alternate anger and sorrow which swelled the hearts of our Southern sisters when they realized their terrible loss through the defeat of their cause.

In another, under the name of "The South Devil," she gives us such a grewsome

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picture of a Florida swamp, with the myriads of crawling insects and gliding snakes which lurk in its miasmatic shadows, that a chill creepiness comes over us as we read, and we consider the possible advantage of a few grains of quinine—or should we rather try a dose of the “mix” which Elizabeth Belamy represents the landlady of Bent’s Hotel as concocting for her guests by way of antidote to the malaria of Mississippi?

“I like,” says she, “a little gin and a little assafetidy, and a little senny to begin with, and I adds snakeroot, and boneset, and dogwood, and willer-bark, and sweet gum-balls, and red pepper, and sage a plenty, and then I fling in a little long sweetenin’ (molasses).

“Every one of them things is good, and when they’re put in a mix, they’re a power.”

The class to which Mrs. Bent belongs, the poor whites of the South, seems of all others the least likely to furnish an instance of womanly heroism and devotion, and yet I have for years cherished the example of

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one of those gaunt, sallow, snuff-dipping sisters as distinctly worthy of my imitation.

The story which records it bears the name of "The Elephant's Track," and its writer, Mrs. M. G. M. Davis, has laid its scene in a benighted region of the wide and unequally developed state of Texas.

I venture to make a somewhat extended quotation from it, from the fact that I have never found it in any collection, and because it seems to me to combine in such an unusual degree the requisites of vivid local color, definite character drawing, and marked originality of plot as to entitle it to stand very nearly at the head of our American short stories.

Newt Pinson, on the arrival of a circus in his neighborhood, thus announces his wild design to give his wife and seven children the rare treat of a visit to its wonders:

" 'It kin be done, Nance, and I'm goin' to do it, if it busts me. I've got just three dollars and a half left outen what Sam Leggett paid me for the yearlin'. But me

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and the children have been talkin' on it over, and they have conclusioned to throw in their aig money—Dan fo' bits, and Pete fo'; Joe and Jed has two bits betwix' 'em, and Polly Maria say as how she hev fifteen cents. I'm lacking of a dime, but I reckon as how I can scratch that up somehow.'

" 'There's my two bits, up yan' in the clock,' said Mrs. Pinson; 'ye can take that if ye are such a plum fool as to pike the whole passel of us to town to see the circus.' "

"Wise or foolish as we may deem it, they set off betimes on the day, creaking along in their rickety wagon, preceded or followed by the entire neighborhood.

"The event of the journey was the coming upon and unloading to inspect the track of the circus elephant, deeply impressed in the soft mud of the wayside, a sight which stirred the hearts of the party with high hopes of the glories to come.

"Short-lived anticipations, destined never to be realized! For on their arrival in town, Newt falls into the snare of an evil-doer,

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and comes back to his waiting family with this dismal confession.

“ ‘We got to go back home ’thout seein’ the show, that’s all. I done lost away every cent of our circus money on a fool game of cards, that’s all. Oh, Lord!’

“A single wild wail burst from the children, a faint flush passed over Mrs. Pinson’s thin face, and the light faded from her dark eyes. ‘Tain’t no difference, Newt,’ she said, lightly; ‘jes’ ye hitch up as quick as ye can, and let’s get out of this here bigoty town. Me and the children are plumb beat out with these stuck-up town folks, anyhow.’ Then to the children: ‘Ef any one of ye says a word to your paw about this ’ere misfortune of his’n, or about hankerin’ after the circus, and if every one of ye ain’t that gamesome and lively as ef there want such a thing as a circus in this livin’ world, I’ll cowhide ye s’well ye can’t set down for a week.’

“A curious hilarity prevailed that night around the campfire beside which they rested on their homeward way.

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“Mrs. Pinson, usually silent almost to taciturnity, painted to her family in glowing colors the pride and wickedness of town folks; she pictured the wrath of Parson Skaggs when he should learn that members of his church had been inside a circus-tent; she related the fate of sundry sinners who had been overtaken by sudden death while laughing at the antics of a clown; she even lifted up her voice and sang some particularly flame-and-brimstone-promising hymn tunes. Even Newt was almost convinced that the five dollars had been well lost in keeping a perfessin’ family out of a circus-tent; and when he slumbered at last, and his wife stretched herself beside him, she murmured, with a touch of triumph in her tone, ‘Anyhow, I have seen the elephant’s track!’ Has any one of us ever reached a greater height of self-abnegation and wifely devotion?”

To pass from such a scene to the picturesque and polyglot city of New Orleans, with the gay throng of its inhabitants darting

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about its verdurous streets like bright and chattering parroquets, is indeed a transition.

Nowhere do we find such a bewilderment of dialect as in the stories of its varied life presented to us by the industrious pen of George Cable, and among these I rank as specially striking that of Posson Jones.

The contrast between the Creole Jules St. Ange, elegant little heathen, and the West Florida parson, his guileless though erring action, gives us a wonderful example of race distinction, and I know of no expression of a superficial religious liberality equal to the creed of the former as announced in these words:

“What a man thing is right *is* right. It is all 'abit. Rilligion is a very strange. I know a man once he thing it is wrong to go to a cock-fight on Sunday evening. I thing it is all 'abit. I thing every man mus' have the rilligion he like the best. Me, I like the Catholique rilligion the best, for me it *is* the best. Every man will sure go to heaven

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if he like his rilligion the best. Even I thing some niggars will go."

In contrast with such utterances as these, Posson Jones's lament over his unaccustomed sins of gambling and drunkenness swells like the deep tones of an organ after the sharp twanging of a mandolin, and we cannot wonder that Jules's first sight of a genuine repentance had power to move the shallow Creole heart to a new longing for a better life.

Grace King's story of "Madriline, or The Feast of the Dead," is intense in the local color of its picture of the strange quarter of New Orleans where the mixed races swarm and wrangle, while the wild voodoo woman works her spell of horror over them all. A veritable inferno, as different from the South of the invalid and the tourist as a picture by Dore from a landscape of Corot.

The characteristics of the various Southern pleasure and health resorts have been distinctly presented by Octave Thanet, and I know of nothing more adroitly done than

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her story called "Six Visions of St. Augustine," in which the conflicting impressions made by the old Spanish city are recorded in a half-dozen letters from as many tourists.

It is a "far cry" from the orange groves of Florida to the prairies of the great West, and as the restrictions of Fortnightly custom constrain me to make of my train of thought and illustration a "limited express," we must hasten on, with only a passing wave of recognition to Bret Harte and his Sierras, toward the main-traveled roads so lately peopled for us by the pen of Hamlin Garland.

He himself says of these: "The main-traveled road in the West is mainly long and weariful, with a dull little town at one end and a home of toil at the other," and the figures whom he shows us as traversing it are chiefly workmen and stolid toilers of the heavy soil of the prairies of Iowa and Wisconsin.

The inventions which have lessened for them the burdens of labor have taken from it something of its poetry and stimulus;

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a soulless machine has supplanted the freely swinging scythe, the nauseous smell of the fertilizer taints the reviving odor of the freshly turned earth, and the monotonous stretch of the prairie adds an element of depression to this daily toil.

They are blind to the beauties of those green and yellow plains with a distance infinite as that of the sea, and deaf to the sound which Mr. Garland almost makes audible to us as in record of the whistle of gophers, the faint, wailing cry of the falling plover, the whir of the swift-winged prairie-pigeon, the quack of a lonely duck, or the honking of the wild geese sailing swiftly down the wind.

No tree to wave, scarcely a sound of domestic life; only the faint sighing of the wind in the short grass or the voices of the wild things of the prairie.

While many of the farmers of New England are pitifully narrowed and sharpened by their effort to wrest a livelihood from their few and rocky acres, these men and

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women of the prairies seem to grow revolt-
ingly coarse and rough; their speech is vul-
garized by an indigenous slang, and their
lives appear to be almost destitute of beauty
or sentiment.

Almost, but not entirely, for that love rules
the prairie farm as well as the court, the
camp, and the grove is proved to us by this
extract from the story called "The Return
of a Private." An overworked and unassisted
mother thus makes her moan: "Girls in
love ain't no use the whole blessed week,
Sunday mornin's they're looking down the
road, expecting he'll come; Sunday after-
noons they can't think of nothing else,
'cause he's *here*. Monday mornin's they're
sleepy and kind o' dreamy and slimpsy, and
good for nothing on Tuesday and Wednes-
day. Thursday they git absent-minded, and
begin to look off toward Sunday again, and
let the dishwater get cold under their noses;
Friday they wash dishes, and go off in the
best room and cry and look out of the win-
dow; Saturdays they have queer spurts of

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working like all possessed and spurts of frizzin' their hair; and Sunday they begin it all over again."

The story from which these words are taken pictures the return of a private soldier from the comradeship and excitement of the camp and the battlefield to the dead level of such a life, and makes us realize that there may be sometimes as much heroism involved in the putting off a man's armor as there is in girding it on.

The distinguishing characteristic of Mr. Garland's work is to me its pronounced virility, and I always fancy him as telling the story of his prairie-folk in a deep, bass voice, which is in marked contrast with the feminine treble which has rehearsed to us the chronicles of New England.

Those who have read the recent tales of McLennan in the peculiar patois of the Habitans of Canada must have recognized a new departure in the record of the simple emotions of this primitive people, and from another borderland one of our townswomen

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has contributed to the *Cosmopolitan* a story of the love and grief of a Mexican mother which is strong in the repressed power of its expression.

Constance Fenimore Woolson, in her sketches of the French and half-breeds of our Lake Superior country, and of the German Separatist Community which still exists in the village of Zoar, shows us the effect of the introduction of a foreign element into our American life, and gives us another instance of the variety which I have claimed for it.

"A small pigeon," says Spurgeon, "may carry a great message," and the senders forth of many short stories have bound beneath their slight wings the weight of their own criticisms and theories of life.

The literary fads of the day have been widely satirized in "A Browning Courtship" and "Our Tolstoi Club," while Grace Denio Litchfield, in "An American Flirtation," shows the paralyzing effect on a group of British matrons of a sight of the freedom of our social intercourse. Margaret Deland,

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in "A Fourth Class Appointment," preaches a whole sermon on civil service reform, and Sarah Jewett's "Decoration Day" rings out the solemn and stirring cadence of a funeral march.

A New England Lear amusingly shows up the whimsies of the vegetarians, and I recommend any who feel themselves growing restive under the matrimonial yoke to read and lay to heart the "Fin de Siècle" of Robert Meyers. Bunner has supplemented the brief flashes of his "Short Sixes" by the steady light thrown on the problems of the labor question by the example of his Zadoc Pine, and has pointed a deeper moral in his "As One Having Authority."

But it remained for Edward Stevenson, in his "Via Crucis," to touch our hearts and deepen our faith by his picture of the last stage of the painful road trodden by those blessed feet which centuries ago were "nailed for our advantage to the bitter cross."

The story is told in a letter purporting to be written by Hilarius Gela, a young Roman,

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who after a night of losses at the gambling-table finds his homeward way obstructed by a cohort of soldiers, which, under the command of his boon companion, Decius Lallius, is acting as guard to the condemned Nazarene on His road to Calvary. In the words of the letter: "The man could hardly stand. I saw that he stooped from exhaustion, but it was as if a god bent in compassion over the earth; and when one of the men who stood beside me flung a fragment of mortar at Him to make Him glance our way, and He did so, and looked, as I fancied, directly at me, why then what think you I either experienced, or imagined that I did?

"It seemed, by the helmet of Mars! it seemed to me as if He demanded of me—of me, Hilarius Gela—'Wherefore hast thou brought me to this hour? It is thyself that has done it!' And thereupon appeared it also to me that there began flashing before me my life—yea, every hour of it since I came to know that I lived.

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“And when the man’s lids fell again over those eyes that so sought out me, Hilarius Gela, I swear unto you that I trembled and stood there with my jaw fallen.

“Then, the worst part of the crowd having gone with the cohort and the prisoner, I went down to the street, and all the way went I laughing and marveling in spite of what I had felt for the instant at the Nazarene’s look, that any man should nowadays believe anything stoutly enough to die therefor.

“Oh, folly indeed! For we come we know not whence, and we go into black darkness, and truth is nowhere, and the gods have become in our day mere shameful and silly fables.”

The manuscript here breaks off abruptly, but receives its key in the following note in another hand, reported to be appended to the single copy preserved in the Library of the Propaganda: “But at this time of persecution in Rome suffered Decius Lallius and Hilarius Gela. Now this Decius Lallius

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had formerly been a centurion who stood guard beside the cross, and Hilarius Gela was his friend, exceedingly zealous for the faith and abundant in good works."

When this subject was placed upon our yearly programme it lacked the limiting adjective which I have ventured to insert, for as I wrote, the conviction forced itself upon me that the time allotted was barely sufficient for the review of those of our own country.

That these are abundant in quantity must certainly be acknowledged, and if we consider at some future time those of the various foreign writers, I do not fear the comparison as to quality.

And yet I feel the charm of François Coppee's delicate pictures of French life, and Guy de Maupassant's realistic portrayal of it; I recognize the artistic skill of Tourguenieff, and I honor the moral purpose which elevates the slightest sketch of the master Tolstoi.

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And above all, I delight in the unique productions of Rudyard Kipling, that brilliant and erratic genius who, like a swift rocket, has lately flashed into our ken—but that's another story!

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~~THE~~ The annual meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society of the district was to be held in the city where I resided a few years since, and I was appointed as one of the committee which was to secure places of entertainment for the delegates.

Our preliminary meetings had been so enthusiastic, and our anticipations of a good time so sanguine, that I accepted my share of the work with alacrity, and set off on willing feet, clogged with but one disturbing fear—that my supply of delegates would not be equal to the demand, and that I might not have enough of them to go around.

I had not finished my first day's tramp, however, before all such fears had been given to the winds, and in the course of the

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second a story would constantly occur to my mind over which I have laughed when I saw only its ludicrous side, and while it still lacked the personal application which had sharpened its point for me from that time forward.

The familiar saying, "He that will observe Providences will always have Providences to observe," holds good in other forms of experience, and nothing is more certain than that those who can enjoy the ludicrous will find no lack of the ludicrous to enjoy.

The experience of one of these laughter-loving souls it was which helped me through my weary round, and I remembered over and over again how she had enjoyed telling of the sending of her coachman to an intimate friend, with the announcement that if agreeable she would lunch with her on the following day. Patrick's returning footsteps were long awaited, and when at last they were heard, were soon followed by the sight of his face beaming with satisfaction, and the triumphant words, "Well, ma'am, I've

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got ye in at last, but I had to go to as much as a dozen places!"

His first application having proven unsuccessful, he had been so loath to dash his mistress' hopes of a *day out* that he had kept persistently on to every door before which he had been wont to stop the wheels of her chariot till he had found one which opened cheerfully to receive her.

"I've got you in at last!" would not have been an inappropriate form of announcement to my share of the delegates that places had been prepared for them; but a more encouraging one was adopted; and let us hope that no hint of the real state of the case ever transpired to chill the glow of their anticipation or remembrance. Of course this want of cordial response was by no means universal, and "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!" might have served as the form of invitation to many hospitable Christian homes, but a large proportion of those to whom I applied "began with one consent to make excuse."

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If a visitation of cholera had been imminent, the necessity of an immediate and thorough renovation of dwellings would not have been more keenly felt, and Flora McFlimsey's destitution of clothes could not have been more deplorable than that which made it imperative for numbers of my Presbyterian friends to have in a dress-maker on the very days of the convention.

Another story, too, would occasionally suggest itself to my mind, that one of Dickens's in which one partner hastens to lay the blame of his own parsimony to the niggardliness of the other member of the firm, for the same form of excuse was repeated over by the members of the firm matrimonial.

She "would be so happy to receive some of the delegates, but her husband disliked extremely to be annoyed by the presence of strangers at his table," and *he* would be transported to entertain a dozen or more, but his wife's nerves were quite unequal to the strain.

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Of course it is "beautiful to see" husbands and wives agree in all domestic matters, but did this mutual deference always prevent his bringing home an unexpected man to dinner, or her from urging her relatives to spend long weeks in their home?

I am sure, however, that women are really more steadily and unselfishly hospitable than men. Most husbands are so sublimely ignorant of possible domestic complications and so serenely confident of the ability of their wives to insure a succession of plentiful and well-served meals as unerring as that of stars in their courses, that their hospitality is but skin-deep compared to that which those wives are often ready to offer in full view of the fact that the best stocked cupboards will have their occasional seasons of bareness.

Even our great exemplar of hospitality seems, from the Scripture record of his entertainment of the angels on that hot afternoon, to have confined his personal efforts to extending the invitation and catching the

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calf; this accomplished, he appears to have confided the rest of the preparation to Sarah and her active helper, the young man, and to have gone back to converse with his friends till the meal was announced. And as we read of Sarah stooping patiently over that blazing hearth-fire for the baking of all the cakes which could be mixed from three measures of meal, may we not doubt whether we have ever done full justice to the virtues of the mother of the faithful? Have we not been wont to consider her a rather uncomfortable person sometimes, and thought that the way in which Abraham walked with her from their first home, in the land of the Chaldees, to her last one, in the cave of Machpelah, must have been a thorny path for *him*? But even his banishment of Hagar, which has seemed to us the crowning ill deed of an unlovely life, may admit of some excuse if we take due notice of the statement that Abraham chose the day on which Isaac was weaned as that of a "great feast," and ask ourselves and each other

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whether that was a time which any woman would select as a good one to have company. Was it not really rather natural that in the desperation of such a crisis in her inexperienced, though late, maternity Sarah should be the least bit fractious and not quite so patient as usual with Ishmael's impish ways? But to return from these Eastern plains to the city streets, where even the fresh breeze of spring failed to lift from my heart its weight of discouraged solicitude, and ask the more practical question which haunted me during those weary days, "What has become of that which Longfellow calls free-hearted hospitality?" Has it fallen in the street, and will it never arise to bless and sanctify the homes which in its absence no modern arts of decoration will ever render truly beautiful?

That it once existed I know well, for my youth was passed in a home whose doors, like the "happy gates of gospel grace," stood "open night and day" to pilgrims from whom the only passport demanded was

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an assurance that they were "to Zion bound."

Colporteurs had as certain a place by the fireside as the coal-scuttle; and yet the hospitality of those days was practiced at more expense of personal effort than is required of us in these later times of skilled and easily purchased service. Life was simpler then, to be sure, and hosts were less ambitious, and guests less exacting; but was not the simple fare and hearty welcome of those days far more in harmony with the hand-to-hand giving of a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, so earnestly commended by our Lord, than the more elaborate entertainment of these times?

The commercial spirit of the age, too, seems to have introduced itself into this department of our daily life, and one hears so much of social indebtedness that many of these modern entertainments might well be called "meetings of the creditors." But is not the careful calculation of debit and credit in such matters an outgrowth of the

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tendency which our Lord expressly denounced, the cold and selfish desire to receive as much again for any effort and expenditure in the direction of hospitality? It is so difficult for us to realize that Christ's words, "When thou makest a feast," will bear translation, "When thou givest a reception," and so easy for us to feel that the cordial and uncalculating hospitality which he enjoined would never do in the times of high living and low thinking to which we have fallen. And is there not danger that the recent revival of the esthetic idea, with its exactions in the way of household decoration, may tend to make our homes less easy and natural places, and to put their mistresses in an anxious and nervous supervision which must prevent the warmth of cordial welcome from accompanying the glow of the wood-fires which we have hastened to relight on resurrected andirons?

As I read a few days since the story of the Shunemite woman's grateful impulse toward the man of God, and the simple fur-

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nishing of that chamber over the wall which was its result, I could not help wondering whether a "great woman" of the present day would be contented with so inexpensive a manifestation of her thankfulness. The bed, the table, the stool, and the candlestick would doubtless each have its place, but would not the bed be draped and ruffled and shammed till the dusty and way-worn prophet would hesitate "to turn in thither," the table and the stool each wear its square of slippery and much embroidered linen, the candlestick bear a useless and decorated wax-light, and the very wall break with a parti-colored arrangement of Japanese fans?

A great opportunity for the woman, no doubt, to display her artistic tendencies, but very likely to take all the ease and freedom from the sojourn of her guest, and to make his future visits few and his stays short.

Dainty table-furnishings and choice bits of ware are certainly fair to see and pleasant to possess, but they too add an element of anxiety to our modern housekeeping, and

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are perhaps the last straw which makes some of us dwellers in this city of the plain ready to echo that wailing preface of the ancient prophets, "The burden of Tyre! the burden of Nineveh!" The fact that this burden is largely self-imposed takes no whit from its weight, but should make us pause and thoughtfully inquire whether we are not in some degree allowing it to hinder our feet from running in the straight path made for them by such simple injunctions as "Pray without ceasing, use hospitality without grudging, and be not forgetful to entertain strangers."

But how much easier obedience to this command would have seemed if the apostle had qualified it a little, and written, "Be not forgetful to entertain agreeable or distinguished strangers." There it stands, however, simply strangers, and we are to "take them for better or for worse," and face the possibility of being bored, which seemed to me one of the most threatening lions in my way to find places for my delegates.

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Of course, I know that this grace of hospitality is one of nature's good gifts, and that some happy souls spring easily to its exercise, while to others the reception of a guest is a solemn affair, and, like matrimony, "not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly"; but does not some of our dread of a prolonged visit arise from a consciousness of a want of simplicity and Godly sincerity in our daily living?

To entertain an angel would be embarrassing in a home where style is held to be of more consequence than godliness, and the shams and wordly ambitions of some households would "shrivel like a parched scroll" before the gaze of burning scorn which must fall on them from the clear-seeing eyes of a heavenly visitor. The arrival of such a guest seems, however, far removed from the possibilities of these latter days, and I must own that their visits have come to be few and far between; but that they do sometimes seem to alight at our doors even now, I have conclusive evidence in a well-

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remembered experience of my youth. This alighting, though, was not heralded by the swift flashing of snowy wings, but less startlingly accomplished by the stepping of an elderly country parson and his wife from a rather shabby one-horse wagon at our gate. For the silver trumpet had called to a holy convocation of the saints of the vicinity, and these had heard and answered, and were billeted on us for the period of their stay. Billeted on us! Rather let me say that they honored us by their presence, for their society was a benediction, and the day of their departure one of deep regret to every member of the household. Years passed with only occasional news of them, until the meeting of the American Board in our city brought one of this pair again to our door. It was the wife, who came alone in her garb of widowhood, for her husband had ended his life of long and patient invalidism a year or two before. In the solemn days when the last things were in full view and the last words were being calmly said, he

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had charged her if this meeting were ever held in that vicinity, to attend it, if possible. In the days of struggling poverty which followed, her own desire to do so might have failed, but she had hidden his words in her heart, and as the time drew near, toiled early and late to procure the means for the short journey. But the farmers' wives for whom she nursed and sewed were slow in payment, and on the day before that on which she had hoped to set off she said to her children, "I must give it up, but father knows I tried to go." But who should doubt the loving care of the widow's God when I tell you that that very evening's mail brought a letter from a former classmate of her husband's, a poor and struggling minister, who from his own deep poverty had sent to her, with many cheery words of Christian sympathy, a sum sufficient for the expenses of her journey?

So you see she could go after all, and the children helped her off, and she had a beautiful time, and came home with a new bap-

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tism of zeal for foreign missions, some drops of which we will hope sprinkled the dry hearts of the farmers' wives who had come so near to keeping her at home.

If I have seemed to dwell unduly upon these lesser kindnesses of hospitality, it is because I hesitate to approach what seems to me to be the deeply underlying cause of our failures in its exercise, and that which causes its flame to burn in fitful flashes of occasional impulse rather than with the steady and cheering glow of Christian principle, for "what am I or what is my house" that I should reproach my sisters with the lack of entire consecration which prevents us from holding our homes, not as our own, not to be used for purposes of selfish enjoyment or ostentatious display, but as kept for the Master's use in the persons of those of His children who need to share in their cheer and comfort.

Some of us can spread before them tables loaded with dainty fare; others can offer little more than a cup of cold water; but at

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each repast may sit unseen the Heavenly Guest, whose presence can change the pure water of Christian hospitality into the bread and glowing wine of heavenly benediction.

“ Lord Christ in mercy bring,
Our selfish ways to shame,
And make our hidden lives shine out
With holier thought and aim,
That one and all who see their light
May glorify Thy name.

“ Free as Thy love to us,
Our fellow-love should be,
Spread like an ever-plenteous feast,
And spread as if for Thee,
Since Thou of all our deeds hast said,
‘ Ye do them unto Me.’ ”

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